

Kela Stout Photography

# Camera Setup

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Disclaimer: I share my preferences for these settings only to help you get started but please play around with these to determine what will work for you and what you are shooting. I primarily work with young children. You may shoot portraits or more still subjects so you can change settings based on that. There are also many other settings within your camera that I may not mention because I do not think they are necessary as a beginner.

## SETTING UP YOUR CAMERA

- Dial Setting
- RAW Format
- Focus Point Setting
- White Balance
- Release Mode

1. Turn your camera's dial/setting to manual mode (M). This will give you the ability to have full control over your settings for aperture, ISO and Shutter Speed. I will explain each of those later in the course.

2. After you set your camera to manual mode, you will want to switch to RAW format instead of JPEG (usually found within menu settings but check your manual for your specific camera). I like to think of RAW as negatives from old film. Even if a photo is lost or damaged, the negatives can be reused to print more. This is the same for RAWs. All the data stays intact and more can be done with the image. JPEG is a much smaller image that cannot be altered as easily without losing quality. You can also do more with the image. For example, bringing colors back or adjusting the lighting.



3. Now you will want to adjust your focus point setting. I personally prefer single point auto focus. This finds a single point on the subject to focus on rather than a broader area giving you more creative ability with your subject. Another thing you need to consider is if you have moving subjects. For moving subjects, AI Servo AF is the best choice to have continuous focus. One-Shot is for when neither you, nor the subject, are moving. AI Servo is for when either you, or the subject, is moving. AI Focus is for when neither you, nor the subject care if your focus is accurate.

- One Shot AF (focus, shoot, focus again for the next shot)
- AI Servo AF (continuous focus)
- AI Focus (just don't use)

4. Next, determine what type of white balance setting you would like to use. White balance is used to adjust colors to match the color of the light source so that white objects appear white. I personally use auto white balance, because I have tried to use kelvin and the results did not seem to suit my needs. Since I shoot mostly at sunset or sunrise, the changes in lighting meant I was constantly changing kelvin. I believe kelvin is wonderful for indoor use or where there is a constant light temperature. As you can see in the images below, picture style/white balance will vary from camera to camera. A good rule is to try to get the picture as natural looking as possible and that's the setting you should stick with.



5. The last setting to consider is if you would like to shoot in continuous mode or single shot mode. Single shot vs Continuous is the release mode. In single shot, the camera fires once when you press (and hold) the shutter release button. In continuous, it keeps firing. I tend to prefer single shot because I change the focus point often. However, this is something you should try out for yourself to see your preference.